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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 06 TEGUCIGALPA 001938

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SUBJECT: SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE (SEPO)

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Classified By: CDA JAMES WILLIARD Reason 1.4 (C) and (D).

I1. (U) The following responses are keyed to the Security Environment Profile Questionnaire (ref A).

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

I1. (SBU) Demonstrations:

(1-A.) Yes. Additionally, there are a number of organizations and groups under the loose collective leadership of (and affiliated with) the Bloque Popular that have been carrying out demonstrations against U.S. foreign policy, as well as demonstrations targeting local issues. The following organizations have been involved in anti-American political activities to varying degrees. They are listed in alphabetical order, utilizing Spanish acronyms where applicable. Post notes that the majority of those organizations are left-leaning NGOs or unions, many of whom maintain good relations with the Embassy. (List updated September 2005):

- ARTISTAS DE LA UNAH

Artists of the National Autonomous University of Honduras (A-UNAH)

- BLOQUE POPULAR
Popular Block

- COCOH
Farmers' Cooperatives Union

- CODECOH
Honduran Consumer Protection Committee

- CODEH
Honduran Committee for Human Rights

- COFADEH
Honduran Committee of Family Members of the Detained and Disappeared

- COHAPAZ
Honduran Committee for Action for Peace

- COLPROSUMAH
Honduran Professional Teachers College (a teachers' union)

- COMPA-H
People of the Americas Convergence Movement (COMPA)-Honduras

- COPEMH
Honduran Association of Secondary School Teachers

- COPINH
Civic Council of Popular Organizations and Indigenous Groups of Honduras (also appears as COPIN)

- COPRUMH
Honduran Professional Association Teachers' Union

- CGT
General Workers Central (the largest of Honduras' three national labor confederations)

- CTH
Confederation of Honduran Workers (arguably, the strongest of the three national labor confederations)

- CUTH
United Confederation of Honduran Workers (the most left of the three national labor confederations)

- FPR
Popular Revolution Forces, a shadowy alleged revolutionary group.

- FUTH
United Federation of Honduran Workers (the largest component of CUTH, above)
- FSM
Feminist Movement (details needed)
- FUR
University Revolutionary Front

- GRUPO LOS NECIOS DE LA UNAH
UNAH Fools Group - Activist group in UNAH that "cheerleads" and motivates demos

- MEH
Honduran Student Movement

- PARTIDO DE LOS TRABAJADORES DE LA FACULTAD DE PEDAGOGIA DE LA UNAH
Teaching Faculty Workers' Party of UNAH

- RADIO GUALCHO
Leftist/Activist radio station (1510Mhz) that works closely with Bloque Popular and is actively involved in most demonstrations

- REPRESENTANTE DE FRENTE Y REFORMA DE LA UNAH
Reform Front Representative of UNAH

- SERUNAH
New UNAH coalition group, like Bloque Popular (but not as prominent)

- SITRAINFOP
National Institute of Professional Formation Workers' Union

- SITRAINA
National Agrarian Institute Workers' Union

- SITRAIHSS
Institute of Social Security Workers' Union

- SITRAUNAH
UNAH Workers' Union

- SITRAUPEN
A Workers' Union (details needed)

- STIBYS
Beverage and Associated Industries Workers' Union (plays a key organizing and logistics role for many demos)- Leader of STIBYS is also the leader of the Popular Block.

- SITRAPANI
Child Welfare Association Workers' Union

- UD
Democratic Unification Party (remnants of the Communist Party of Honduras and other former Marxist parties; represented in the National Congress)

- UNAH
National Autonomous University of Honduras

- URP
Revolutionary People's Union

NOTE: The most fervent anti-U.S. groups are: MEH, URP, UD, Bloque Popular, STIBYS, COPINH, and COMPA-H. The following groups have committed and participated in acts of political vandalism (against the Honduran Government and other entities) that resulted in the destruction of public and private property: Bloque Popular, COPINH, Democratic Unification Party (UD), and The Revolutionary People's Union (URP).

(1-B.) Yes. There have been 40 demonstrations in Tegucigalpa since August 2004, including nine demonstrations either held outside or near the U.S. Embassy. While not all demonstrations are directed against the U.S. Government, many are convoked to protest against U.S. foreign policy initiators, such as Operation Iraqi Freedom or the Central American Free Trade Agreement. On December 13, 2004, there was a demonstration that resulted in local police using tear gas outside of the National Congress against the demonstrators, consisting mainly of local university students and administrators (reftel B). On March 8, several groups protested against the CAFTA resolution which was passed by the Honduran Congress on March 3 (reftel C). On April 8, the Honduran public sector unions protested against alleged back

pay, and the Honduran police used water and tear gas to break up the crowd (reftel D). On May 11, approximately 150 people from the Consejo Civico de Organizaciones Populares e Indigenas de Honduras (COPINH) and the Bloque Popular again protested against CAFTA. And most recently, on September 7 and 8, protesters comprised of mainly public transportation (taxi) drivers blocked streets in protest against an increase in gasoline and other basic products. Access and egress from the main airport in Tegucigalpa were shut-off for approximately 14 hours (reftel E).

(1-C.) About half of the demonstrations noted above have taken place near U.S. Mission facilities.

(1-D.) The size of demonstrations at the Embassy varies from twenty to over three hundred participants. The larger demos usually consist of supporters from six to more than twelve different organizations, which operate as a loosely structured coalition under the guidance of Bloque Popular.

(1-E.) While there are demonstrations based on local issues, such as civil service salaries, privatization, gasoline prices, and IMF requirements, the current focus has been on U.S. actions in Iraq, the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), as well as previous U.S. involvement in Venezuela and Haiti. The following statements, demands, and gestures have been made repeatedly during past demos at the Embassy: No to war in Iraq, No to war, Stop Plan Colombia, Pro-Human rights, World Peace, Stop Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), U.S. Forces out of Honduras (Soto Cano AB), U.S. Military out of Cuba, U.S. destroy your WMD, Stop intervention in Venezuela, Stop Standard Fruit from exploiting the indigenous people, Opposition to CAFTA, No to privatization, Stop intervention in Haiti.

(1-F.) Generally peaceful, but demonstrators have burned U.S. flags, thrown rocks, painted slogans on Mission outer perimeter walls, and utilized homemade mortars to detonate large fireworks charges that are propelled high into the air before exploding.

(1-G.) N/A.

(1-H.) N/A.

(1-I.) Yes.

(1-J.) Yes. Occasionally they will pass by the Embassy.

(1-K.) The size varies from a few hundred to approximately five thousand people.

(1-L.) Generally peaceful, but fences, grillwork, and windows have been destroyed near the National Congress, as well as many tires burned. At times, suspected plain-clothes police have been held and beaten by hard-core protesters within the demonstrations.

On occasions, small groups of thug-like cadre have initiated/instigated violence against static police guards by attempting to strike them in the lower leg areas, which are not protected by riot shields with heavy placard poles with large nails embedded in the ends. Several police officials have been injured in unsuccessful attempts to get the police to use force.

(1-M.) N/A.

12. (SBU) Macro Conflict Conditions:

(2-A.) No.

(2-B.) N/A.

(2-C.) N/A.

(2-D.) N/A.

13. (SBU) Host Country Capabilities:

(3-A.) No.

Police are somewhat mediocre in professionalism and training; they are also somewhat apathetic toward post residential security requirements, including response to alarms and investigation of incidents in Mission neighborhoods; they have definite resource/manpower limitations that inhibit their deterrence or response effectiveness.

The National Preventive Police and Criminal Investigations Directorate General (DGIC). Both departments suffer from a lack of manpower, training, equipment, low pay, and motivation. Honduras has the lowest per capita ratio of police in Latin America. They lack the capital to purchase

and maintain vehicles (including gas) and radio equipment. There is no standard service weapon. Despite numerous training programs and efforts by many nations, including the U.S., the DGIC is lacking in morale, leadership, and resources. In numerous traffic accidents involving Mission personnel, the response time has exceeded several hours by the transit police. The courts, prosecutors, and police are extremely susceptible to bribery and influence, causing reversals in judgments against the Embassy. In one incident involving a Mission employee and a Mission dependent, where guns were pointed into their backs and faces and they were significantly terrorized, the police never showed up, even after repeated calls. Terminations have been numerous for both political as well as criminal reasons and extend beyond positions normally considered political appointees. In other cases, certain high-ranking police cannot be terminated for technical reason. Morale and integrity in the DGIC is seen as low. The problem is exacerbated by continued fighting between the Minister of Public Security, the Attorney General's office, prosecutors, and judges.

(3-B.) Yes. Training by U.S. Border Patrol Tactical (BorTac) teams is good, but GOH security infrastructure needs major improvements.

(3-C.) Yes. Although not directly tied to a law enforcement agency, significant corruption was recently uncovered within Honduran Immigration, namely from the former Immigration Director Ramon Romero. The Honduran Immigration scandal continues to dominate press headlines. The Special Prosecutor for Organized Crime is appealing the August 18 release of Romero, who was jailed for four months (reftel F).

(3-D.) No. However, GOH intelligence units have an institutional awareness of and a modest capability of penetrating indigenous radical groups.

(3-E.) Yes.

(3-F.) No. (They have almost no capability to detect or disrupt international terrorist activities).

(3-G.) Yes.

(3-H.) Poor. There is widespread corruption within immigration and customs and a measurable lack of security coordination within the airport. Physical security is also inadequate, as the perimeter lacks effective fencing, vehicle barriers, and lighting.

(3-I.) Ineffective. Corrupt officials are easily bribed, and therefore pose a real threat to U.S security interests. Honduran passports, for example, have been fraudulently obtained through immigration and customs officials for use by subjects not legitimately entitled to them.

(3-J.) Average/Ineffective. A unit within the Ministry of Public Security called the Frontier Police handles border patrol duties. The unit is making positive steps towards border control, but lack of funding and manpower are limiting the effectiveness of the unit.

4. (SBU) Indigenous Terrorism-Anti American Terrorist Groups:

(4-A.) No.

(4-B.) N/A.

(4-C.) N/A.

(4-D.) N/A.

(4-E.) N/A.

(4-F.) N/A.

(4-G.) N/A.

(4-H.) N/A.

5. (SBU) Other Indigenous Terrorist Groups:

(5-A.) No.

(5-B.) N/A.

(5-C.) N/A.

(5-D.) N/A.

(5-E.) N/A.

16. (S/NF) Transnational Terrorism-Transnational Terrorist
Indicators:

(6-A.) No. However, there are rumors that in the past there have been Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA), IRA, and Chiapas (Zapatistas) sympathizers in Honduras who could be involved in advising indigenous groups. Some Hondurans are studying in Cuba and also conceivably could be receiving training in subversion and terrorism, although it is more likely they are being indoctrinated as agents of influence. As this Cuban program for Hondurans is in its infancy, there have been no indications that such training is taking place.

Additionally, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has a notorious presence in Honduras, especially in the northern coastal areas, where they routinely trade drugs for arms.

There were two further incidents of note:

Incident 1 - In November 2004, a Lebanese-flagged merchant vessel, Abdul Rahman, was discovered carrying large quantities of explosives. The explosives had not been reported to port officials when the ship arrived. The vessel is on watch list for possible terrorist links based on information indicating its owner Wael OZOR was an al-Qaida sympathizer and had connections to Hizballah (reftel G).

Incident 2 - On September 19, 2004, two Jordanians were detained in Costa Rica for using fake passports. They were deported back to Amman, Jordan, and interviewed by Jordanian authorities. They stated that they were in Central America looking for work. They did not mention receiving assistance from anyone or why they traveled to four Central American countries. RSO has been able to obtain documentation that, while in Honduras, the two were assisted by a third party who paid for their hotel, food, and a plane ticket to facilitate travel. Subsequently, RSO Tegucigalpa, working with other sections, has found a possible link between the telephone number called by Abdel Rahman Nassar and the two Jordanian subjects with known alien smuggling groups within Central America and Hizballah terror group in the Middle East (reftel H).

(6-B.) N/A.
(6-C.) N/A.

(6-D.) N/A and No.
(6-E.) N/A.

(6-F.) The only known hostile intelligence presence of note is Cuban. While the Cuban mission appears to have extensive contacts with leftists and indigenous groups, there is no indication they are planning or supporting terrorism. Likewise, while there is concern over alleged Venezuelan contact with and possible funding of Leftist organizations, there is no indication that they are planning or supporting terrorism.

(6-G.) There is no shortage of weapons in Honduras. It would also not be difficult for hostile terrorist elements to import weapons and/or explosives from neighboring countries.
Williard